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ABSTRACT

Described is the creativity center program, part of Project Gifted, an educational program for gifted intermediate grade children. The report pertains specifically to the Warwick Public Schools in Rhode Island. The program is described to give gifted children opportunity and encouragement in their academic and personal development. The program offers educational opportunities in both verbal and nonverbal learning, with half of the program focusing on creative writing, and half on visual arts activities. Eighty children participated during the first year and were divided into 10 groups, each group spending one half-day session in the creativity center for a total of 36 lessons. The teacher role is defined to be that of creating a favorable, receptive atmosphere, of recognizing and encouraging talent. Art is thought to have great potential for revealing children's ideas and emotions and for nurturing their creative growth. Specific objectives of the visual arts program and the creative writing program are listed, followed by the educational objectives of illustrative lessons. Suggested art processes and media are listed, as are composition language, and style skills. (For related studies, see also EC 042 228-230.) (CB)

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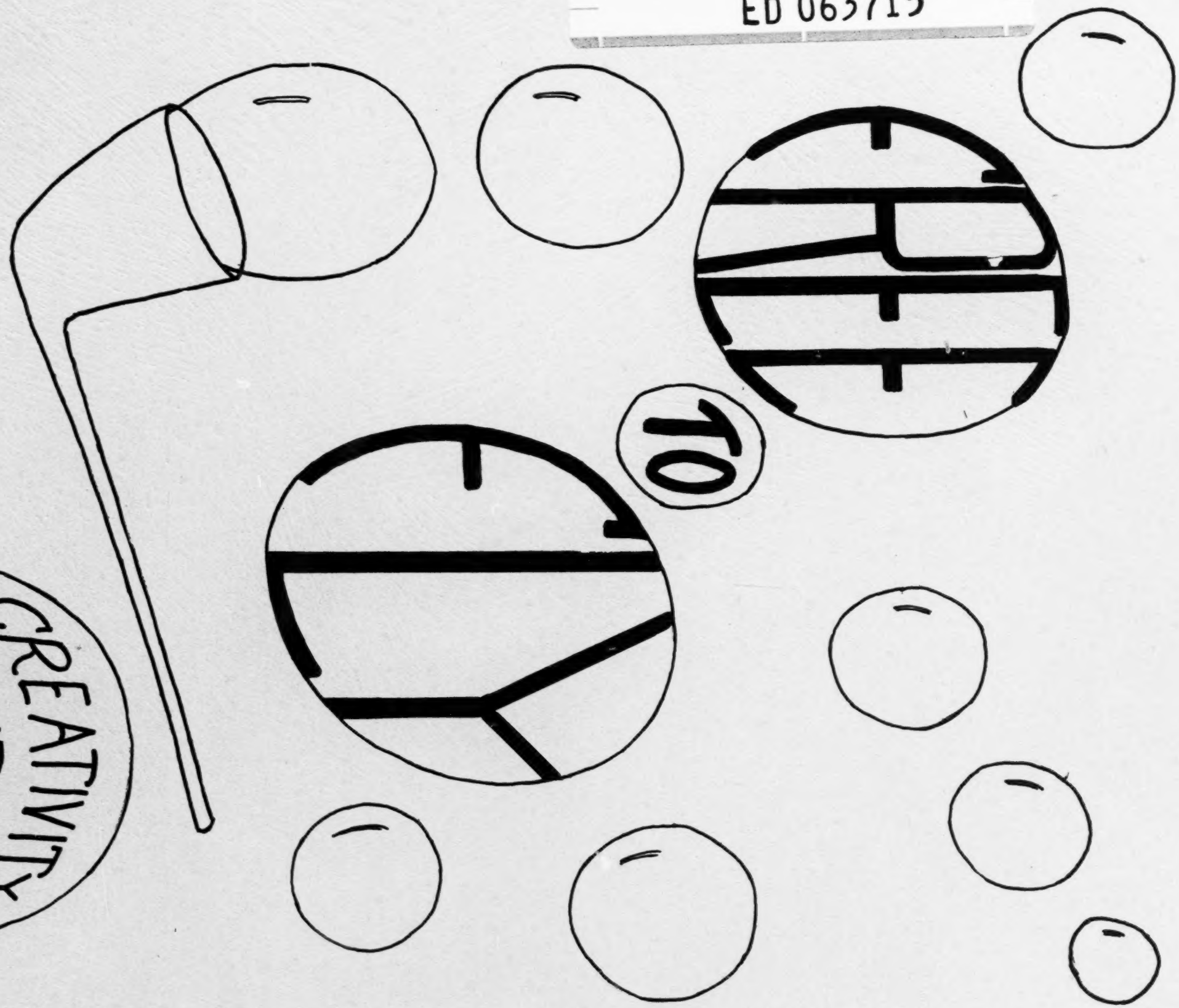

CREATIVITY CENTER
WAWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND
TITLE III
ESEA

PROGRAM OF THE CREATIVITY CENTER

PROJECT GIFTED

WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND

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A TITLE III, E.S.E.A. PROGRAM

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RATIONALE OF THE PROGRAM

There is an oft-quoted comment to the effect that "today's gifted students will be the leaders of the future." Thoughtful educators would question the complete truth of this statement, for less able youths who relate to people easily will become leaders, while some of the gifted will not. However, one can certainly hope for the gifted to assume leadership roles in adulthood. For the good of society then, their creative potential should be nurtured as early as possible, and experiences provided which will help them develop this potential. In addition, they should experience the tremendous personal satisfaction in being able to say it is "mine own," - an impetus for further creative effort.

Although research seems to indicate that creative potential does not correlate highly with intellectual potential, intelligence is a factor in creativity. Gifted children may not think creatively for several reasons, - "... because they lack motivation, purpose, persistence, self-discipline, self-confidence, or other necessary temperamental qualities, or because they have had no opportunity or encouragement."[1] Therefore, their potential for creative thinking remains hidden, and they seem to be less creative than others.

The program described here is an effort to give to gifted children opportunity and encouragement. In one year many pupils in the program discovered unknown potential for creativity, and felt great satisfaction in

their achievements.

The program offers opportunities in both verbal and non-verbal areas, with half of the concentration being in creative writing, and half in visual arts activities. The eighty children served during the first year were divided into ten groups, each group spending one half-day session each week in their special classroom, the Creativity Center. Their total experience included thirty-six lessons.

The atmosphere of the room was one to nurture creativity, which does not develop in a vacuum. "The potentially creative person needs encouragement, opportunities for expression, and sound instruction; he must derive satisfaction from the creative process and product. Creativity develops as the person responds selectively to his own environment. His initially simple perception tends to be developed into increasingly complex concepts and patterns of expression."[2]

"Creativity obviously is suppressed in an environment that schedules every moment of a child's time, requires unnecessary drill, discourages originality, offers no challenging work, and provides no opportunities for exploration, judgment, and self-direction."[3]

The teacher's role in developing creativity is a major one, - of

creating this favorable, receptive atmosphere, of recognizing talent, appreciating accomplishments, encouraging spontaneity, and fostering creative expression. Basic to all of this is familiarity with the common components of creativity, such as those listed by Fliegler:

1. Sensitivity to the world of nature and the world of man and to the problems inherent in these worlds.

2. Keen perception of significant details in the environment . . an emotionally perceived experience such as the song of a solitary bird at twilight.

3. Ability to see relations between perceptions and ideas, to combine and arrange them into original and coherent patterns . . the song of the bird to the general sadness and sorrow of human life.

4. Ability to see and express the uncommon. . . . unique, vivid expression.

5. Fluency of ideas. . . . apt associations spontaneously occur. . . .

6. Acceptance of discipline necessary to master the techniques by means of which ideas may be expressed. Revising . . . is hard, scholarly work.

7. Flexibility in modifying an accepted idea or an established pattern. Something original is added. . . .

8. Wholehearted attention and concentration on the task.

9. Objectivity and judgment in appraising one's products. ....continuous appraisal is necessary to improve.

10. Satisfaction in the creative process. . . . itself.

11. General intelligence is also a factor in creativity.[4]

1,2,3,4 Fliegler, Louis A. (ed.), Curriculum Planning for the Gifted.

In the Creativity Center program the teacher found these components of creativity to be present in both art and writing, and she found her role to be that described on page three. Stress was first placed on creative thinking unhampered by specifics, skills, and refinements. In "perfecting" their productions, effort was made to help the children grow in the latter abilities.

CREATIVITY THROUGH THE VISUAL ARTS

Art has a great potential for revealing children's ideas and emotions, and for the nurturing of their creative growth. Creative art experiences are among the most effective means known for developing creative potential. All children can find pleasure and satisfaction through art activities.

The intellectually superior child has a greater capacity for learning, curiosity, drive, and a wide range of interests. He can also see relationships quickly, generalize, and abstract. Therefore, an art curriculum should be flexible and diverse providing a depth of experience that will allow the gifted child to learn the uniqueness of each media.

Opportunity for the development of increased sensitivity fosters the

creative child's awareness of his environment. As he expresses his thoughts and feelings in visual form he grows in skill, knowledge, confidence, and creative power.

It is the purpose of this program to offer gifted children such learning experiences in the visual arts as will excite them, challenge them, and encourage them to use their giftedness effectively.

Comprehensive Objectives

The purposes of the program were based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, - the Cognitive, the Affective, and the Psychomotor domains, which find counterparts in Art. "Art as a subject has three aspects:

a. the making of works involving various materials and processes;

b. the knowledge of art objectives in relation to the culture; and

c. the critical evaluation of art products." [5]

The program was designed to nurture creativity, to provide an enriched background, and to involve the children in a variety of experiences in flexible, divergent situations that would encourage abilities, attitudes, work habits, and the basic understanding of the principles of art in a process-oriented plan.

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5 Why Art Education? National Art Education Association, Washington, D.C.

Creative potential. vivid imagination, and natural curiosity were well demonstrated in this flexible relaxed atmosphere, and unusual latitudes were attained.

Specific Objectives

Cognitive Domain - the learner will:

1. Grow in his perceptual discernment.
2. Develop a better understanding of basic art principles.
3. Grow in his ability to create and design effectively in a variety of media.
4. Indicate his knowledge about use of various media.
5. Indicate growth in concepts and vocabulary relative to the visual arts.
6. Integrate his art with creative writing.

Affective Domain - the learner will:

1. Grow in his aesthetic discernment.
2. Recognize and appreciate art as a common language in all cultures.
3. Show an awareness of the inter-relation of art to all things.
4. Indicate a feeling of self-realization and personal satisfaction in creative pursuits.
5. Evaluate his own work and appreciate peer evaluation.
6. Indicate peer group involvement.

Show development of aptitudes and interests.

Psychomotor Domain - the learner will develop the skills necessary in the use of the various media.

In every instance the results showed that no one domain was in itself free of the other two.

Illustrative Lesson

Art media lend themselves well to Bloom's Taxonony of Educational Objectives, i.e., a painting lesson.

Designing and Painting a Composition

Cognitive Objectives - the pupil shall experience cognitive growth through:

1. Recall of knowledge of design, composition, color, line, form, and methods previously learned.
2. Gaining of knowledge of the new material (use of Acrylic Polymer paint).
3. Reordering and/or combining of ideas and methods.

Affective Objectives - the pupil shall indicate personal involvement and change through:

1. Appreciation of design elements.
2. Emotional response to subject matter, media, and process.
3. Satisfaction for accomplishment.
4. Self-evaluation and evaluation of the work of his classmates.

Psychomotor Domain - the pupil shall grow through muscular and/or motor skill development in handling materials, tools, etc. (In this lesson paints, brush, and paper or canvas)

Integration of all three Domains - the pupil shall indicate this experience by his final product.

Suggested Processes and Media

Processes	Media
Basketry	Reed and raffia
Book Binding	Paper, vellum cloth, thread
Batik	Wax, cloth, paper
Ceramics	Clay, red and white Glazes
Collage	Scrap materials, cloth textured, wire, plastics building materials, paper, magazines
Color (Taught and applied through all processes)	Paint, pastels, crayons, magic markers, dyes
Constructions	Paper, wood, wire, cardboard
Craft Papers	Oil paint, water color, poster paint, wax, crayon
Design (Taught and applied through all processes)	Taught and applied through all media
Drawing	Pencil, magic marker, brush, conte crayon, charcoal, pen and ink, Sketcho, chalk, pastels, mixed media, litho-graph crayon
Enameling	Copper, glazes, lumps and threads, findings, solder, adhesive
Lettering	Pencils, pen and ink (speed-ball), poster paint, cut paper

Metal Foil Tooling	Copper, brass, aluminum, metal foil, repoussè tooling
Mosaics	Paper, egg shells, ceramic tiles, foods, aggregates, plastics
Murals	Cut paper, poster paint, chalk, ink, crayon
Painting	Water color, poster paint, oil paint, finger paint, chalk on wet paper, ink with water color, sponge
Paper Machè	Paper, adhesives, paint, varnish
Printmaking	Linoleum wood, wax, plaster block, brayer, ink monoprints
Sculpture	Balsa wood, plaster of Paris, ceramic clay, plasticine, plastics, paper, salt block, fish line, wire, flex span, reed, string, casting in sand, sawdust, and paraffin
Stained Glass	Tissue, oil papers, glass, kiln, solder, liquid solder, lead calm
Stenciling	Paper, cloth, glass, paint, chalk, brush, crayon
Stitchery	Cloth, mesh, burlap, yarn, raffia, string, thread, sisal cord
Textiles	Batix wax, dye, heat
Weaving	Looms, wood frames, card-board, pot holder frames, yarn, string, sisal cord, raffia, cloth strips

There was constant effort to integrate art and writing activities wherever

Art Work

A circle here,

A squiggly there,

Pictures, pictures, everywhere.

Paintings, drawings, dots, and lines,

Making them is so much fun.

Art work, art work in my mind,

Taking it out and trying to find

The way to make beautiful pictures.

Crayons, pencils, brushes, paint,

To use them I just can't wait.

When it's time for art

At the end of the week,

I'm glad I'm not sick.

I hope that forever

I'm able to draw,

And paint, and cut,

And much, much more.

- Jean Kozij
Age 11

CREATIVE WRITING

Gifted children find language easy to master. Very early they show facility in understanding the spoken word, and usually begin to try their skill at speaking before the average child. They are quick to master vocabulary, sentence patterns, and the sequences of listening and talking. Then, with this background for associational processes, they quickly master reading.

In order to record some of this fluent oral language, it is necessary for them to master writing skills. Often their thoughts race far ahead of their pencils, writing becomes drudgery, and thoughts are poorly recorded. Creativity in writing must be fostered through a minimum of routine requirement. Encouragement for creating is essential, with a realistic requirement regarding language skills, such as spelling and punctuation.

The program described here placed its stress on originality, flexibility, and fluency, with great concern for the excitement of capturing, organizing, and expressing unusual thoughts in unusual ways. The routines were taught as needed, and for the purpose of making the expression understandable and effective.

Comprehensive Objectives

The structure of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives was used

as the basis of the goals for the creative writing program. Although the Psychomotor Domain played an insignificant role, both Cognitive and Affective were omnipresent. Creative writing involves thought processes and emotional involvement, always on the part of the writer, and often within the content.

Generally the objectives in the creative writing experiences were the fun of writing, interest in writing something different differently, and awareness of the components of creative writing in others' writing and in their own.

Specific Objectives

Cognitive Domain - the learner will:

1. Show increased productivity in creative writing.
2. Demonstrate increasing sensitivity to the possibilities for creative writing in a given situation.
3. Show greater versatility by writing in a greater variety of forms.
4. Show growth in use of imagination through such channels as the use of figures of speech, and creative presentation of factual knowledge.
5. Show growth in the skills of writing through improved sentence structure, organization, and sensitivity to the use of words and punctuation, a general maturing of style.

Affective Domain - the learner will:

1. Indicate self-discovery and self-realization through his own creative writing.

2. Indicate appreciation of his classmates and a feeling of being appreciated by the confidence and freedom he shows in group discussions and in his writing itself.

3. Indicate keener awareness of the sensory and the emotional through the content of his writings.

Psychomotor Domain - The psychomotor aspect of creative writing seems to be of minimal importance. Therefore, no objectives need to be set out for this area.

Illustrative Lesson

Both Cognitive and Affective objectives were necessary for all creative writing, as in the following experience:

"Imagine you attended George Washington's 239th birthday party."

Cognitive Objectives - the learner will:

1. Bring into focus through recall his own historic knowledge about George Washington and the colonial period, - clothing, architecture, characteristics of George and Martha and their associates.

2. Possibly obtain unknown facts through research.

3. Work his selected facts into an accepted plan of his writing.

4. Indicate growth in skills of writing and in his style through his final composition.

Affective Objectives - the learner will show in his writing that he:

1. Imagined the author's (his own) relationship to the colonial

setting and characters.

2. Experienced the emotional incidents in the story.

3. Felt satisfaction in a composition well conceived and executed.

Suggested Experiences

Many forms of writing are taught:

poetry		essay
play		research
narrative	exposition	description

Growth in creative writing requires two types of attention:

a. A great deal of free-flowing original thinking in the author's own style.

b. At least a minimum of attention to correctness and value judgments on style. Both of these require the learning and application of the skills of written expression for the achievement of superior writing.

In grades four through six the following skills need to be developed:

Composition Skills:

Choosing a subject

Creating characters

Blending characteristics with events

Use of conversation

Use of main idea

Choice of developmental ideas

Use of descriptive words

Use of imagination

Use of humor

Planning a poem

Studying sequence of plot development

News reporting

Writing dialect

Writing riddles

Use of details

Outlining for organization

Writing explanations

Studying mood or tone

Writing narrative poetry

Writing unrhymed poetry

Exaggerated poetry, narrative, description

Writing an allegory

Writing narrations

Imaginative, factual writing

Writing a fantasy

Writing an editorial

Poetry in advertising

Writing plays from fairy tales and nursery rhymes

Writing a play of a narrative poem or a story

T.V. commercials - original or "spoofs" on current ones

Original plays

Language Skills :

Correct usage

Well-constructed sentences

Sentence patterns

Punctuating dialogue

Punctuating contractions

Possessives

Punctuating sentences

Vocabulary development - extensive, varied

Synonyms, antonyms

Classification of words

Study of nouns, noun markers, possessives, kinds of nouns, verbs, adjectives, verb forms, adverbs, pronouns

Word order

Word structure

Sentence analysis

Style:

Use of contrast

Use of comparison

Value judgment - most precise word

Clarity

Use of synonyms, antonyms

Use of symbolic language

Use of figures of speech

Use of sensory words

Use of emotional words

Variety of sentence structure

Use of "colorful" verbs

Writing dramatically

Use of dialogue appropriate to the situation

Denotation and connotation

Vocabulary development

3. A great variety of motivators is used, some prepared sources and many created by the teacher:

Motivating Situation	Suggested Application
Studying a picture	Description, narration
Reading of a story, myth, fable, etc.	Plot development
Reading of poetry	Whatever purpose was in mind
Discussion of current events	Research report, imaginative writing
Reading a play	Writing a play, description of a character
Observance of holidays	Any form, factual or imaginative
Research on various topics	Any form, factual or imaginative
Various seasons	Any form, factual or imaginative

Relationships with other people	Specific person (description, narrative)
Sensitivity to the handicapped	Sensory, perhaps emotional
Sensory awareness	Any form, imaginative based on fact
Emotional sensitivity	Personal thoughts on an emotional concept
Situations selected freely by the writer	Any purpose
Writing an ending to a story	Imaginative
Writing directions for doing something	Writer's choice
An emotional moment	Happy, awesome, fearful
Pretending the writer is ?	Imaginative

4. After the discussions, which were directed toward fluency and flexibility, pupils usually were given complete freedom in choice of form, and were expected to be original in content. Poetry was the form most often chosen by fourth-level pupils, but fifth- and sixth-level pupils balanced their choices quite evenly among poetry, narrative, description, and essay. Although the older pupils seemed to feel more comfortable with writing sentences and paragraphs, with scope and sequence, quality writing appeared just as frequently with fourth-level pupils.

5. Whenever feasible the children were encouraged to integrate their writing with art. For instance, they were taught to letter so they could make some pages which simulated illuminated manuscript. After a school vacation some children wrote about a trip and painted an illustration to accompany their writing.

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